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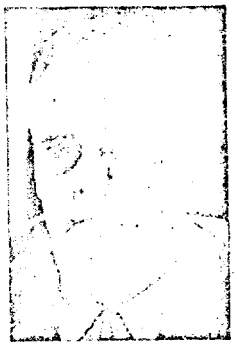
CIA: HOTTEST ROLE IN THE COLD WAR

An expert's intimate picture of the U. S.'s growing spy system and how it scored a decisive victory over Khrushchev



Ever since he served U.S. Army Intelligence in World War II, Enno Hobbing has been a fascinated student of intelligence organizations and their methods. This interest was particularly spurred when, after the war, he had the opportunity to interrogate the leading members of Hitler's spy system. His career since the war has taken him into numerous areas ridden with international intrigue; he was the editor of *Die Neue Zeitung*, the U.S. military government German-language newspaper, when it was published in postwar Berlin, and he has been a news correspondent both abroad and in Washington

I'm so good that I could swagger.
I know things that would make you stagger.
I'm 90 per cent cloak . . . and 10 per cent dagger.
Boo-boo, baby, I'm a spy.

SINCE the days in World War II when a puckish Istanbul orchestra played this song every time an unmistakably American intelligence officer entered its café, the U.S. intelligence business has shucked any and all quixotic romanticism. It is cold and serious big business now, with upwards of 8,000 people employed by the pre-eminent U.S. intelligence organization, the Central Intelligence Agency. And CIA work, for all its partaking of many of the monotonous characteristics of corporate enterprise, is today the pursuit where an American in peacetime supremely looks into the soul of others and his own. The CIA man is more constantly, closely and tellingly at grips with his Communist opposite number than any other American. The CIA man may penetrate those state secrets the Reds want to hide and he conceals the American secrets the Reds seek. The CIA man may discreetly disinfect a foreign political climate poisoned by Red insinuations. Or the CIA man moves swiftly through foreign political back rooms, to rescue and revive a friendly government and a friendly people who were on the verge of being choked by Communist pressure. Where he succeeds, the CIA man gets no public acclaim, but has the unmatched reward of knowing that he, in the night, massaged the heart of freedom back to life.

Within the last year, the CIA men have had loaded on them the biggest range of responsibility that they have borne in their decade of existence. (The CIA was established in September, 1947, when the lessons of World War II made it apparent that the many disparate intelligence activities of U.S. government departments needed a center and a head.) As long as Joseph Stalin ran the U.S.S.R., the East-West struggle was bluff and blatant, noisily black and white. With the advent of Nikita Khrushchev, it has become a much more subtle proposition. Clandestine activities in the Stalin era, it seems fair to say, had a vital tactical significance. But Khrushchev has inaugurated what may properly be called "the clandestine era," where such work is of strategic scope. In the place of the old hammer-handed Communist motto that "who is not for us is

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against us," Khrushchev seems to have substituted sibilly "who is not against us is for us." He has announced a deceptive, dulcet campaign of competition for men's loyalties that Whittaker Chambers has described as possibly making Communism "radioactive" again.

But Nikita Khrushchev did not succeed in starting that campaign with the surprise and the finesse he had hoped. The CIA spoiled his start, and in so doing declared that the U.S. was prepared to counter him on his own clandestine grounds.

When the U.S. last year published to the world what Khrushchev had spoken in secret at the decisive 20th Party Congress of the Soviet Communist party, the CIA was reputedly responsible. One of its operatives is believed to have obtained a copy of the speech abroad and sent it to CIA in Washington. (Curiously enough, one of the few things not secret about the CIA is its location. Over the entrance at 2430 "E" Street is a sign proclaiming that it is the headquarters of the Central Intelligence Agency.) Its publication, through the channels of the State Department, wrecked the cautious timetable that Khrushchev had presumably set for letting the speech and its radical implications trickle down through the world-wide Communist apparatus. The various Communist parties, instead of being spoon-fed de-Stalinization through a gentle dosage of Kremlin directives, grew visibly sick.

Thousands of members quit the Communist parties, in a mass defection probably unmatched since the disillusionment of the Hitler-Stalin pact. Those who remained clashed in bitter factional fights in their own countries—and remonstrated excitedly with a Moscow that was unprepared for their knowing so much about the new line so soon. The political potential of the Red International plummeted sharply downward. At the same time, all the anti-Communists were explicitly warned of the new tactics of cajolery and camouflage that Moscow had in mind. As an erstwhile CIA critic grudgingly exclaimed, "With the publication of the Khrushchev speech, CIA certainly justified whatever it spent last year."

The story of how CIA got hold of the Khrushchev speech could conceivably be told. But the telling would contribute more to the Soviets, in hinting how they might break up an excellent American "penetration" of their apparatus, than it would to American public enlightenment. Suffice it to say that the CIA has at its disposal an ample battery of ways to procure Communist documents. Coded Communist communications can be monitored and the codes broken. Communist couriers can have their pouches rifled and the contents photographed and replaced, all without their knowledge. Communist defectors may turn up as "walk-ins" at a CIA "front" installation and deliver a bagful of vital papers—something like turning state's evidence in an American court proceeding. Or there may be at CIA's command that living paragon of clandestine assets, the "defector in place"—*i.e.*, a Communist who has broken with the party without the party's knowing it, and who now uses his party position to feed a stream of documents and oral reports to his CIA "case officer" in regularly scheduled meetings in a CIA controlled "safe house." By one or more of these ways, CIA presumably scored its coup in procuring the Khrushchev speech.

A word to the worried, who by now may be concerned about the propriety of American involvement in such shenanigans. The intelligence business is at least as old as the time when Joshua sent spies into Jericho. The purpose of intelligence work has always been quite simple: to discover in just what way the enemy was lying, to help and save friends in the enemy camp, to protect the intelligence man's own people against foreign trickery and treachery. But the importance of intelligence has never been higher in history than today, when the Communist empire avowedly works on two levels: the diplomatic and public for sheer purposes of deception, the covert and quiet to slaughter the sheep who believe what Moscow officially professes. Yet some Americans in 1957 persist in the Wilsonian ideology of 1917, of "open covenants openly arrived at," and decry U.S. clandestine activities. Others adhere to the maxim of the redoubtable Henry L. Stimson who, as Secretary of State under Herbert Hoover, closed down the tiny secret section of the State Department with the observation that "gentlemen do not read other people's mail." Both these postures lost their validity after 1945, when

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international communism became a commanding menace on the international scene. Indeed, for the U.S. public today in peacetime to have qualms about the existence of CIA as a civil shield of the republic makes about as much sense as to have qualms about the existence of the Strategic Air Command and the H-bomb as a military shield.

What is of concern to the public, just as the quality of U.S. missiles, bombs, planes and pilots are of concern, is the quality of U.S. spies. How well qualified are the CIA men to take up the inescapable gauntlet that Khrushchev has thrown down?

CIA men come in a kaleidoscopic variety of shapes, sizes and qualities—as they do in all human institutions. The director of CIA, the grey and genial sixty-four-year-old Allen W. Dulles, is a former Wall Street lawyer. His chief value to his law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell, was not, however, in his command of legal details. Instead, Dulles was regarded by his legal partners as, first, a superb customer's man and, second, the man who was willing to make the decisions they were reluctant to take. Both these talents stand Dulles in excellent stead in his job as director of the Central Intelligence Agency today.

From Wall Street to CIA via OSS

The former customer's man is generally regarded as the peer of American "case officers." He built that reputation with the World War II OSS in Geneva, Switzerland. There he secured a fantastic flow of vital reports—the date of the Nazi attack on Russia, the location of the main V-1 bases—out of Hitler's Germany. He did it by instilling in German agents like the celebrated "George Wood" (whose real initials were K.F.) the same mixture of confidence in him and attachment to the U.S. that he had once instilled in the clients of Sullivan & Cromwell. From his practical experience in intelligence details, Dulles as CIA chief has an intimate understanding of the problems of his lower echelons. His capacity to make decisions naturally serves CIA well too. He has been known to break up divided and uncertain meetings of his top advisers with a confident wave of the hand, "The operation will go on."

Next to Dulles in the CIA hierarchy is the sparsely sandy-haired and deeply Southern Air Force Lieutenant General Charles P. Cabell. He was formerly the boss of the secretariat of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the Pentagon, and represents the CIA potential for effective co-operation with the military intelligence services. The presence of Cabell, like that of Dulles, underscores the fact that while the CIA itself is only ten years old, it operates with American intelligence experience of considerably better vintage. In Cabell's wake in the CIA come many former officers from the military intelligence services who find their flair for espionage better rewarded in the CIA than in the services, where line and all-around performance is at premium; and service, supply and communications officers who provide CIA with a hard core of logistical know-how. Dulles, in his turn, heads a CIA contingent that includes lawyers who by temperament prefer to be the principals, rather than the counselors, in an action; former business executives who in the middle of life suddenly hanker after rewards beyond money; and young men of private means who are unselfishly eager to redeem their unearned good luck.

Then there are in CIA the ex-FBI men, who bring with them the investigative talents of an older organization, in which they perhaps did not have the chances to advance that a new one offered. There are *émigrés*, Germans who fled Hitler, Russians and many other nationalities, with their varying wealths of language and area expertise. A sizable CIA category consists of ex-academicians, who can have more fun, make money and pursue action rather than abstraction in the intelligence business. These include scholars with staggering linguistic gifts and poetical types with an incredibly sensitive apperception of the psychological motivations of potential agents. Finally, as it must to all organizations, there comes to CIA the crowd of secretaries, budget officers, personnel directors and other administrative officers who, while they use the same talents that are required in non-secret work, share the clandestine atmosphere.

A secular monkishness unites all these men from very diverse backgrounds. They are really excluded from the inquisitive and open American society, where everyone is expected to answer the question, "What do you do?" Those in the "overt" part of CIA, the section devoted to re-

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search and to the compilation and evaluation of the flood of intelligence information that pours in, can admit to working for CIA. But at the next question, "What do you do there?" they must clam up; and they must sit mum and feignedly ignorant through many a dinner conversation where an amateur rattles off his views on the very subject on which the CIA man is an expert. For if he identifies what he is doing, or if he shows what he knows and thinks, the CIA man pinpoints a secret preoccupation of the U.S. government or a secret policy. The "overt" side of CIA is responsible, at the head of a task force from the military and other government intelligence agencies, for the preparation of the National Intelligence Estimates—the closely reasoned and finely qualified studies of foreign countries and international issues that distill everything overtly or covertly known to the U.S. into objective analyses for the National Security Council and its chairman, the President himself. If an "overt" CIA man talks, and it gets about, the Soviets will have clues to the innermost councils of the U.S. administration.

The members of the "covert" side of CIA, the one that through secret operations collects the information or creates the circumstances which the "overt" side evaluates, must keep themselves even more under wraps. Ideally, they should be able to claim plausibly some occupation totally different from CIA. But the task of acquiring "cover" and keeping it is tricky and arduous. For example, it is practically impossible for a CIA man to masquerade as a journalist because the journalistic fraternity is a close-knit and gregarious one, where everybody knows roughly what everybody else is up to, and where, moreover, a man who does not get published an amount of copy that requires his full working time soon finds himself under suspicion. Business "cover" is theoretically more practical; an agent could have a relationship with a firm that would leave him partly free for his CIA work. But, the claims of the Communists that capitalism and CIA activities go hand in glove notwithstanding, American companies are notably cool to the idea of putting agents on their payrolls. Blocked at many a turn by the open-and-aboveboard American way of doing things, "covert" CIA men must devise some kind of "cover" as best they can. Often, it means they just have to keep out of sight as much as possible.

This means that for social life and intellectual stimulus, the "covert" CIA operatives are really thrown on each other. Their wives cannot be told what they are doing. Their children are put off with some vague story and not infrequently get the idea that their dedicated fathers don't amount to much in the world. Neighbors barge in, expansive about their own affairs, and feel a slight chill when the CIA man does not talk as freely of himself. When the covert operative goes on his tours of overseas duty, he is again confined to a small sector of the foreign human scene, denied the expansive pleasures that living abroad can have. No matter where he is, the operative works odd hours, often meeting his contacts at night and sometimes dropping from view for weeks and months—while his wife worries helplessly and he has little idea if something has not struck his family that requires his presence at home.

To these personal deprivations, official ones must be added. Security is the first requirement of intelligence work; therefore the operative knows that, rather than being implicitly trusted by his superiors, he is necessarily under their constant scrutiny for any signs that he may be disloyal. If he gets into any kind of official row with a boss or a colleague —and this happens in any organization—he should not take his case to any public court of appeal. Worst of all, if the operative falls into Communist hands, he knows that his government has to disavow him. It is a claustrophobic environment, in which only the very strong and the supremely devoted survive to do well.

The CIA just has to take it

Just as the CIA man has no public recompense or redress, he and his organization have no defense against public attacks. When someone cries out after a national fiasco, "Where was our intelligence?" CIA lacks the privilege of producing proof that it was right there. When CIA is accused of doctoring the National Intelligence Estimates to serve the political purposes of a current administration, the CIA cannot put its outraged refutation [illegible]

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can readily rip apart without betraying its own mission is that it has practically arrogated unchecked control of U.S. foreign policy.

Actually, the CIA is perhaps more closely checked than any other government agency. The inborn instincts of the democratic process, ever on guard against secret concentrations of strength, have seen to that. Seven of the most respected and responsible members of the U.S. Congress form an *ad hoc* working group privy to CIA operations. The CIA budget, which is packed into other appropriations for purposes of concealment from foreign enemies, is known to selected officials in the Bureau of the Budget and several members of Congress. In the last few years, two notable committees have been through the agency stem to stern, one headed by Lieutenant General Jimmy Doolittle, the other by General Mark W. Clark. Today there is in existence the President's board for checking on the CIA. It is headed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology President James R. Killian, Jr., and includes such knowledgeable figures as former Defense Secretary Robert A. Lovett, Doolittle, steel magnate Henry Ryerson and others. This board, with full access to CIA activities, must report to the President twice a year. Meanwhile, Allen Dulles reports to the National Security Council every week.

Since the CIA is an instrument of U.S. foreign policy, it must also co-ordinate closely and constantly with the pre-eminent U.S. foreign-policy agency, the Department of State. (The joint decisions of State and CIA are subject to National Security Council approval.) State may counsel against undertaking some operations on the ground that there could not be "plausible denial" of the U.S. hand if the operations were "blown", *i.e.*, publicly exposed, and that the damage to U.S. interests from a "blown" operation might be greater than what the operation could hope to achieve. However, considering the effrontery with which the Soviets deny participation in clandestine operations in which they have been caught Red-handed, it may well be that the U.S. should consider "implausible denial" as sufficient.

Among the things that CIA is permitted to do, one function is obvious: intelligence procurement. Several others are matters of speculation.

CIA extracts Communist secrets by research, by technical means and by straight agent operations. CIA analysts read everything published and obtainable from the Communist orbit. Between the lines, they find a wealth of information that the Communists would like to keep concealed, but which they unconsciously imply in what they say. The CIA analyst's job is of course immensely more complicated than that of his Communist opposite number, who can take American publications at face value. The CIA analyst is the man who must overcome the intelligence advantage that the Soviets gain by censorship.

Electronic leakage: for and against

The CIA technical specialist also competes against formidable Communist opposition. Any U.S. embassy or diplomat's home behind the Iron Curtain is "bugged" by the Red landlords, who conceal electronic audio surveillance devices with extraordinary skill and imagination. Outside the Iron Curtain, Red agents attempt to install such devices in important U.S. headquarters. The enemy listening gadgets must not only be found so that American official business can be transacted in privacy; it must also be assumed that some of them are not found as soon as they are put in. In retaliation, CIA men presumably go about the business of "bugging" Communist offices so that there is at least as much electronic intelligence leakage out of them as out of U.S. offices.

But exhaustive reading and ultramodern electronics cannot and will not replace the classic figure of all intelligence work, the agent. How does a CIA man recruit a member of the Communist apparatus for U.S. service?

CIA obviously never reveals its methods to outsiders. But the whole process of wooing agents has been practiced by many nations over many centuries. And since a human equation is always involved in recruitment, it is doubtful that CIA has discovered anything new in the field. The classic pattern of agent recruitment transposed into CIA circumstances can be fairly closely imagined.

The process may begin with an analyst in Washington. He may note that Mr. Z, in a foreign Communist apparatus, was moved over for promotion. Playing a hunch that Z might be miffed, the analyst may go to CIA's vast collection of personal dossiers and examine Z's biography for

"vulnerabilties." Is he in trouble with the party before? Then he might be promised assistance and asylum in return for certain services to the U.S. Does he lean toward "national Communism"? Then a limited bargain might be struck where he and the U.S. co-operate against Russian influence on his country. Is he highly intellectual or idealistic? Then CIA might envisage sending one of its top ideological debaters to win him away from Communism. In any event, Mr. Z, unbeknownst to him, has now been "spotted for recruitment."

The next step is the "approach." A CIA case officer in Z's country obviously should not approach Z cold. If Z refused to be recruited, the case officer would not only be "blown." He might be expelled from Z's country, his other operations endangered, the whole U.S. penetration of the local Communist party jeopardized. In dire emergencies, CIA men can make successful "cold approaches" to key foreign nationals and secure their co-operation in the nick of time. But in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is essential that a third party be employed between the case officer and the potential agent to feel the latter out.

In Z's case, the CIA man might use a Communist party clerk or chauffeur who is already on the CIA payroll. He would be instructed to try to get a job near Z, where he could observe him and gradually gain his confidence. Then he would report regularly to the case officer on Z's moods, opinions and problems. Sifting these reports, the case officer might eventually decide that Z seemed ripe for the crucial "approach."

This is, of course, one of the most tense and chilling moments in the intelligence business, and has to be prepared with maximum care. The clerk or chauffeur might be chosen to do it, if his psychological relationship to Z seems sufficiently strong for him to convince Z to turn agent. But in case the clerk or chauffeur should fail, the crucial rendezvous has to be held in a site—preferably a CIA-controlled "safe house"—from which he can speedily be evacuated to safety, before the outraged Z can turn him over to the police. Alternatively, another already employed local agent might be injected into the picture—with similar precautions for his safety. In that case, the man who had been reporting on Z would not be exposed. He could either keep further tabs on Z if the approach failed, or he could serve as a check on Z's loyalty while Z is working as an agent. Or, depending on circumstances, the CIA man could make the decisive approach himself. This is frequently necessary because foreign agents want the visible assurance that they are actually dealing with the U.S. and will enjoy whatever protection the U.S. can give them during their hazardous duty.

Recruitment of an agent

The "approach" scene compels the CIA man to marshal all his knowledge, authority and persuasive powers with the resourcefulness of a top-notch lawyer—and with the knowledge that, if his argument fails, he pays the penalty of the client. But if Z capitulates, the CIA man then moves relievedly on into the "recruitment," the fixing of the objectives, communication arrangements and compensation aspects of the new agent-case officer relationship.

Z will be given precise instructions as to the type of information he is to obtain and pass on. He may communicate with the case officer through a "dead drop," an innocuous-looking address to which the agent reports are mailed, or some physical spot where the agent leaves them and the case officer picks them up. A "live drop" may be used, a store or professional office where the agent leaves his reports, disguised perhaps as a package, which the case officer collects without the "live drop's" knowing what it is all about. Again, a "cut-out" may be injected, another agent who can meet Z with more safety—and then Z may hardly see the case officer at all. Or regular "safe-house" meetings may be scheduled between Z and the case officer. For these, there would always be prearranged "emergency signals" in case either one felt he had been followed to the rendezvous. Other signals would be devised to warn that either party had to skip a rendezvous. Finally, as the last detail of the "recruitment," a form and a rate of compensation will be arranged. It is a mistake to assume that agents generally work for money. Many do it simply for anti-Communist reasons.

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With good luck Z could [illegible] for years in the same country. Meanwhile the U.S. would profit from a constant flow of secret information out of Z's party. But the day may also come when Z is no longer safe as a "defector in place." Then he has to be evacuated, often to the U.S. There, after he has been thoroughly "debriefed," after CIA men have for weeks and months gone over all the knowledge that he might not have had time to communicate in his necessarily infrequent and brief meetings with the case officer abroad, Z may be "surfaced." This means that Z will be permitted to appear at a press conference or some other appropriate forum. There he will tell the world those secrets of his Communist apparatus that are of no use to CIA in the planning or execution of further agent operations, but do have an anti-Communist propaganda value.

An outstanding example of a "surfaced" defector is Joseph Swiatlo, the former colonel in the UB, the Polish secret police, who fled to the West in 1953. What Swiatlo told the world and his own Polish people about the machinations of the UB completely discredited the UB and the Stalinist apparatus in Poland. It directly paved the way for the Gomulka take-over of power in October 1956—and helped to hand Nikita Khrushchev his humiliating defeat when he flew to Warsaw to halt Gomulka, and failed.

This shadow area on the fringe of the intelligence business has been extended by some press reports claiming that the CIA had a hand in rescuing the country of Iran from Communist infiltration and that of Guatemala from a Communist government. Such press assertions have never been proved. But naturally they lead to speculation as to how the CIA might be of help in similar situations.

The speculation can only be pursued by glancing at the extensive operations of the Communists in the field generally known as "political warfare." It is known that the Soviets subsidize the propaganda work of Communist parties all over the world. It is known that the Soviets are masters of the art of partisan warfare and have set up potential guerrilla armies in many countries. (In France, for instance, it is estimated that the Communists can call on some 50,000 "durs" for an armed civil uprising if they should judge the moment opportune.) Moreover, the Soviet hand has been plainly visible in such postwar *coups d'état* behind the Iron Curtain as Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Hungary and Poland. In each instance, it was evident that the Soviet ambassador or some special deputy arriving from Moscow steered the local Communists through their piecemeal whittling down of the democratic forces and presided over the final liquidation of the democratic process.

Strength where it is needed

It is certainly to be hoped that the CIA has at its disposal some countervailing talents and assets to such Soviet stratagems. It would be cruel indeed if, say, the Ruritanian Democratic Party in still-free Ruritania succumbed to the Communists because it did not have as much skilled assistance and advice from the U.S. as the Ruritanian Communists inescapably receive from the Soviets. Especially in underdeveloped countries, where the science of government is often at a low ebb and where the Soviets pour in funds and agents in order to exploit the chaos, it seems desirable for the U.S. to assist the democratic forces to develop proper security measures against the Red enemy. And where a Communist coup may be in the making, it appears almost mandatory for the U.S. to put some mature political skill and strength at the disposal of its friends. Often the beleaguered democratic forces abroad could not openly appeal to the U.S. for this kind of help, because the Communists would hypocritically but tellingly raise the cry of "imperialism." The help would have to be secretly provided.

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The public speculations on the CIA role in Iran and Guatemala provide hope—but no real assurance—that the U.S. is at last catching up with the Soviets in its capacity to bail out its sinking allies in many parts of the world.

All the things he does—and the added things that he probably ought to do—throw a tremendous burden of responsibility on the CIA man, for which he gets small pay and less recognition.

Why does he stay on the job?

For one thing, he is a child of his time, the clandestine era. He is like the mountain climber who ascends the peak "because it is there." The Soviets are there with their vast subversive apparatus; someone has to conquer it on behalf of the U.S. Anyone who thinks that proposition through may find himself mailing a job application to Allen Dulles. His organization consists largely of men who have.

A CIA man's epitaph is his own

Then, odd as it may sound to the conventional man, CIA work satisfies a profound sense of morality. The abstract devotee of the "nonintervention" school of political thought will stand by in pious horror as Communists take over people and nations. He will do nothing about it because that would be "intervention" too. For a professor's mess of pottage, he is ready to let human beings and human heritages pass into bloody oblivion. He will, however, write an eloquent epitaph. The CIA man believes that only those things are moral that are real. If by intelligence work in all its ramifications he can save lives and happiness and free institutions in a jungle world, that is civilized and right with him.

Lastly, the infinitely complex clandestine age takes on for its intimate U.S. participants a splendid simplicity. Across the street from the CIA agent, maybe next door, invisible but ever-present is the enemy, his Communist counterpart. Amid the organizational jungle of modern life, the CIA man's task is as clean and exhilarating and individually crucial as ancient single combat. ##